



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**March 22, 2010**

### **VCOSS welcomes Victorian Government move to investigate impact of smart meters on low and middle income Victorians**

The Victorian Council of Social Service has welcomed the Victorian Government's decision to investigate the impact of the roll out so called smart electricity meters on low and middle income households.

Chief Executive of VCOSS Cath Smith said that while of time of use electricity meters might help some Victorians control their energy costs they could also lead to energy price hikes for those people who spend a large amount of time at home during the day, or who cannot shift their energy use.

"We're pleased the Victorian Government has recognised that the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities and older people, or those at home with small children might not get a better deal once the roll out of smart meters to millions of Victorian households is complete.

"It's imperative that the impacts of time of use pricing are investigated and measures are put in place to ensure low income and disadvantaged households are not worse off.

"We welcome the commitment to review concessions in light of the equity impacts of new tariffs. Any changes to concessions must make sure that electricity is affordable for low income households."

In addition to the measures announced today, VCOSS calls on the Victorian Government to commit to providing assistance to low income and disadvantaged households to ensure they are not worse off under a time of use tariff system.

**For more information, or to arrange an interview with Cath Smith  
call Ian Woolverton on 0415 424 367**